SCR 1511 envisages strengthening of the role of the UN in Iraq in areas of humanitarian assistance, economic reconstruction and in the political transition leading to establishment of representative government.

We have taken note of the appeal in the resolution to UN members states to assist the Iraqi people in their efforts in the reconstruction of Iraq. In this context, we reiterate our readiness to contribute to the restoration of infrastructure, medical, health, education, communication and other civilian needs of the Iraqi people. We will therefore be participating in the International Donors Conference in Madrid later this month.

NEW DELHI; October 17,

2003

Trade relations with Pakistan

287. DR. ALLADI R RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India seeks normal trade relations with Pakistan to benefit both the countries; and

(b) if so, the measures taken in this regards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of India have always sought normal trade relations with Pakistan. In this endeavour, the government, from time to time, have encouraged a number of trade promotion measures, and India continues to extend MFN status to Pakistan, unilaterally. As a part of Prime Minister's initiative of April 18, and the process of the step-by-step normalization of relation with Pakistan, India has promoted exchange of high-level business delegation between the two countries. In this framework, a 120-member business delegation from the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry visited India (July 7-8, 2003) at the invitation of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). It was

followed by the visit (Sept 13-16, 2003) of a group of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Pakistani companies for the establishment of Indo-Pakistan CEO's Forum. A joint India-Pakistan trade website was also launched on the occasion. Participation of a large contingent of Pakistani businessmen in the India International Trade Fair (IITF), held at New Delhi in November 2003, was facilitated. In addition, Government has also approved an exhibition of "Made in Pakistan" products in India.

India's proposals for normalising relations with Pakistan

288. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: SHRIMATI
SAVITA SHARDA: DR. ABRAR AHMED:

- Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India proposed a dozen of steps to Pakistan to ease the tension between the two countries;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals sent by Government to Government of Pakistan;

(c) whether Government have received any response from the Government of Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) In continuation of Prime Minister's initiative of April 18, and as a part of the step-by-step approach to normalise relations with Pakistan, India, on 22 October 2003, announced a series of steps to further promote people to people contacts between the two countries. The proposals included resumption of civil aviation links to be followed by resumption of the rail link; resumption of bilateral sporting encounters including